



Logistics Team Gets VP's "Golden Hammer"

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WASHINGTON (Army News Service, June 11, 1998) — A group of logisticians at Fort Lee, Va., [received] a prestigious executive branch award June 12 for their successful efforts in streamlining the Army's supply process.

The logisticians earned Vice President Al Gore's "Golden Hammer" award. Established in 1993, the "Golden Hammer" recognizes teams of federal, state, or local government employees for their efforts in reducing bureaucracy, putting customers first, empowering employees, and simplifying governmental processes. More than 1,000 "Hammer" awards have been presented since the program's inception.

The Fort Lee recipients — current and former military and civilian logisticians — put together the Army's new supply, maintenance, and financial process called velocity management. It is a process improvement program based on best-business practices, said Quartermaster Corps Lt. Col. Joe Walden, who heads the Velocity Management Team, part of Fort Lee's U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command.

Walden said velocity management initiatives, a key component in future Army operational strategy, have enabled the Army to save more than \$75 million during the past two years and forecast projected savings of \$30 million this fiscal year.

Other velocity management team members include Lt. Col. John Simpson, Maj. Gus Pagonis, Chief Warrant Officer (CW5) Leo Gibson, Chief Warrant Officer (CW3) Gene Perrino, Jan Smith, Harry Johnson (contractor), Lowell Lovin (contractor), and Bruce Hackett (contractor).

The CASCOM and Fort Lee commander, Maj. Gen. Dan Brown, [presented] the award on behalf of the National Partnership for Reinventing Government. Several former team members [were] also present at the ceremony, [held] at CASCOM headquarters.

"Velocity management is applicable in garrison and deployment [environments]," Walden said. "The aim of velocity management is to get support to the soldier as quickly and efficiently as any first-rate commercial firm, while still providing a hedge against unforeseen interruptions in the logistics cycle."

The Army is adopting velocity management logistics to save time and money, Walden said. The system cuts out the "middleman" or unwieldy, large warehousing operations and their attendant costs, he said. Advances in computer technology and telecommunications now enable the shipment of parts and supplies straight from the manufacturer to the customer.

Shipments can also be tracked en route, allowing flexible deliveries to customers, Walden said. Tank parts needed for repairs in the field, for example, can be diverted in case the customer, such as a mobile armored division, moves on to another location.

Velocity management efforts have enabled the Army to decrease its average repair cycle times (deadline, or unusable to mission-capable equipment) by 35 percent during the past two years, Walden said.

"The goal of velocity management is to improve readiness while reducing costs and improving logistics responsiveness," he said.

The Army's Velocity Management Program started in 1995 after a study by the RAND Corporation on streamlining logistics, Walden said. The CASCOM commander was appointed as the Executive Agent for Velocity Management by the Department of the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics. A team was established within CASCOM to implement the program Army-wide.

The program is managed through the use of four Process Improvement Teams, Walden said. These teams are focused on repair cycle time reductions, order-ship time reductions, [and] stockage determination — developing the optimal stockage policy and financial/logistical interfaces, he said.

The CASCOM Velocity Management Team works the day-to-day management of these teams, which have conducted walk-through assistance visits at every Army installation with the exception of those in Alaska, and that [was] scheduled for June 15-19, Walden said.

The efforts of the CASCOM team under the guidance of Tom Edwards, deputy to the CASCOM commander, Walden said, have produced a 50-percent reduction in the order-ship times across the Army and a 55-percent reduction in the order-ship times for the Army's most-deployable Forces Command units.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at <http://www.dtic.mil/armylink/news> on the Internet.